

Weekly Views

Be informed about the Indiana Department of Correction

"It is impossible to win the race unless you venture to run, impossible to win the victory unless you dare to battle." ~ Richard M. DeVos

Friday, May 22, 2009

Offenders in the Organic Gardening Program at the Indiana State Prison prepared 42 flats and planted over 2,000 donated seeds to help the International Friendship Gardens get ready for their main fundraiser of the year, "The Plant Sale."

Oakland City University held graduation ceremonies at New Castle Correctional Facility with 2 offenders receiving Bachelor's Degrees and 40 offenders receiving Associate's Degrees.

Kairos #10 was recently held at the Rockville Correctional Facility with all 42 participants completing the program. The Kairos team was comprised of 47 volunteers, supported by 13 outside kitchen helpers. The Sunday closing ceremony was also attended by an additional 80 members of the outside community.

The River City Rollers, a local wheelchair basketball team, played against students and staff at South Bend Juvenile Correctional Facility. The Rollers won, but not by much. During the breaks, each player for the Rollers told the story of how he ended up in the wheelchair.

PEN Products has updated its website to the new format, and it went live this week. Take a look at the PEN Products website at www.penproducts.com.

Branchville Correctional Facility Superintendent Gil Peters and other BTC staff have been traveling to various state facilities to share ideas developed with local judges on problem solving courts. These problem solving courts are sentencing individuals to prison mandating they complete certain re-entry programs before coming back for a modification hearing. If the modification is granted, the offender will be sent to the court's drug or re-entry program.

40 volunteers from the local Prison Fellowship organization spent the weekend at the Westville Correctional Facility providing evangelistic programs and concerts. The organization presented all offenders with an elephant ear and a beverage. Over 3,000 elephant ears were prepared and served to the offender population.

A pilot program called Reach One Teach One had its first graduation at the Indiana State Prison. Reach One Teach One is a curriculum designed to train offenders to be peer educators. Topics include HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and tuberculosis (TB), as well as public speaking skills and cultural and self awareness. St. Joseph County Health Department provided the training.

Correctional Industrial Facility recently celebrated Christmas Behind Bars. Every offender had a chance to hear a Christmas program and receive a Christmas present. This program was conceived by Lemuel Vega.

Three IDOC staff attended a 3-day workshop in Maryland for Health and Human Services/Office of Family Assistance grantees. IDOC's Fatherhood and Marriage Education programs are funded by HHS/OFA. IDOC was consistently recognized by training staff as leading the country in providing services to incarcerated fathers.

The Kairos Prison Ministry Organization concluded a 4-day program at the Pendleton Correctional Facility that involved participation by 42 general population offenders.

Two staff members from the Indiana State Prison recently gave a lecture on prison life and gangs to approximately 50 people at the American Legion in North Judson, IN. The speakers were also asked to give their lecture to area educators.

New Castle Correctional Facility offenders tithed \$336.86 to be donated to the Gyson family of New Castle. The father and infant son were severely burned in a garage fire several weeks ago and are still recovering in the Wishard Burn Unit.

Students from Butler University in Indianapolis toured Indianapolis Juvenile Correctional Facility this week. The Criminal Justice students asked staff questions concerning the daily operations and procedures for running a juvenile facility and about student programming and re-entry.

Grace College held a graduation at the Indiana State Prison. 12 students received Associate's Degrees and 14 received Bachelor's Degrees. 7 students were recognized for academic achievements and placed on the Dean's List.

From the Office of Edwin G. Buss, Commissioner